CREATED BY KEVIN AND LUKE LERDWICHAGUL
JASMINE YANG MATT GAGLIONE LUCY XUE
GLITCH
PRODUCTIONS
SOURCE
META
RUNNER
001

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CREATED BY:
KEVIN AND LUKE LERDWICHAGUL

I KNOW IT'S TAKEN A WHILE.
BUT YOU'RE FINALLY READY TO GO BACK OUT THERE.
THEY ALL LAUGHED AT ME AND CALLED ME A FAILURE.
BANG!
BUT JUST WAIT UNTIL THE WORLD SEES YOU...

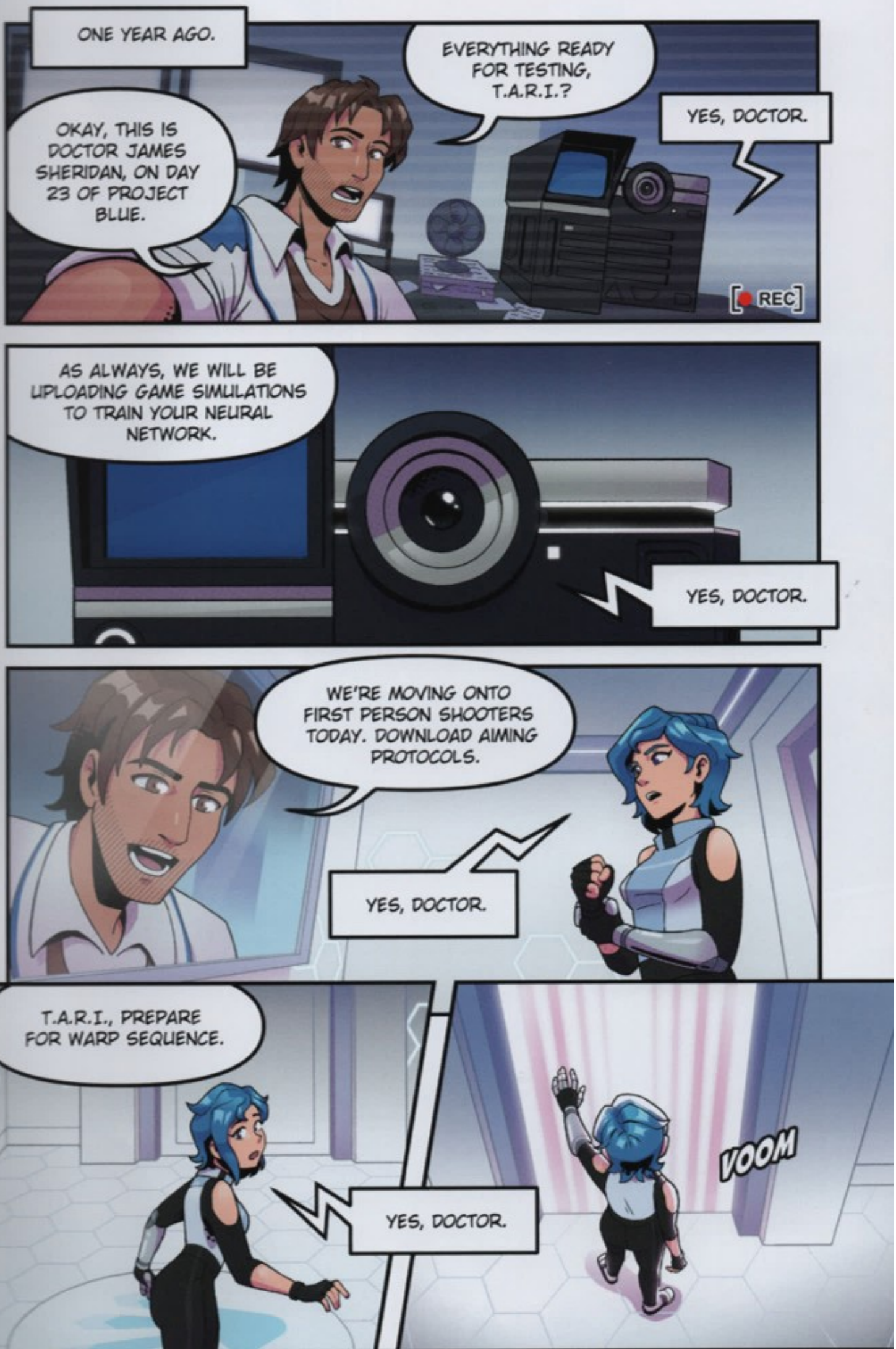
META RUNNER SOURCE

CHAPTER 1

HELLO WORLD

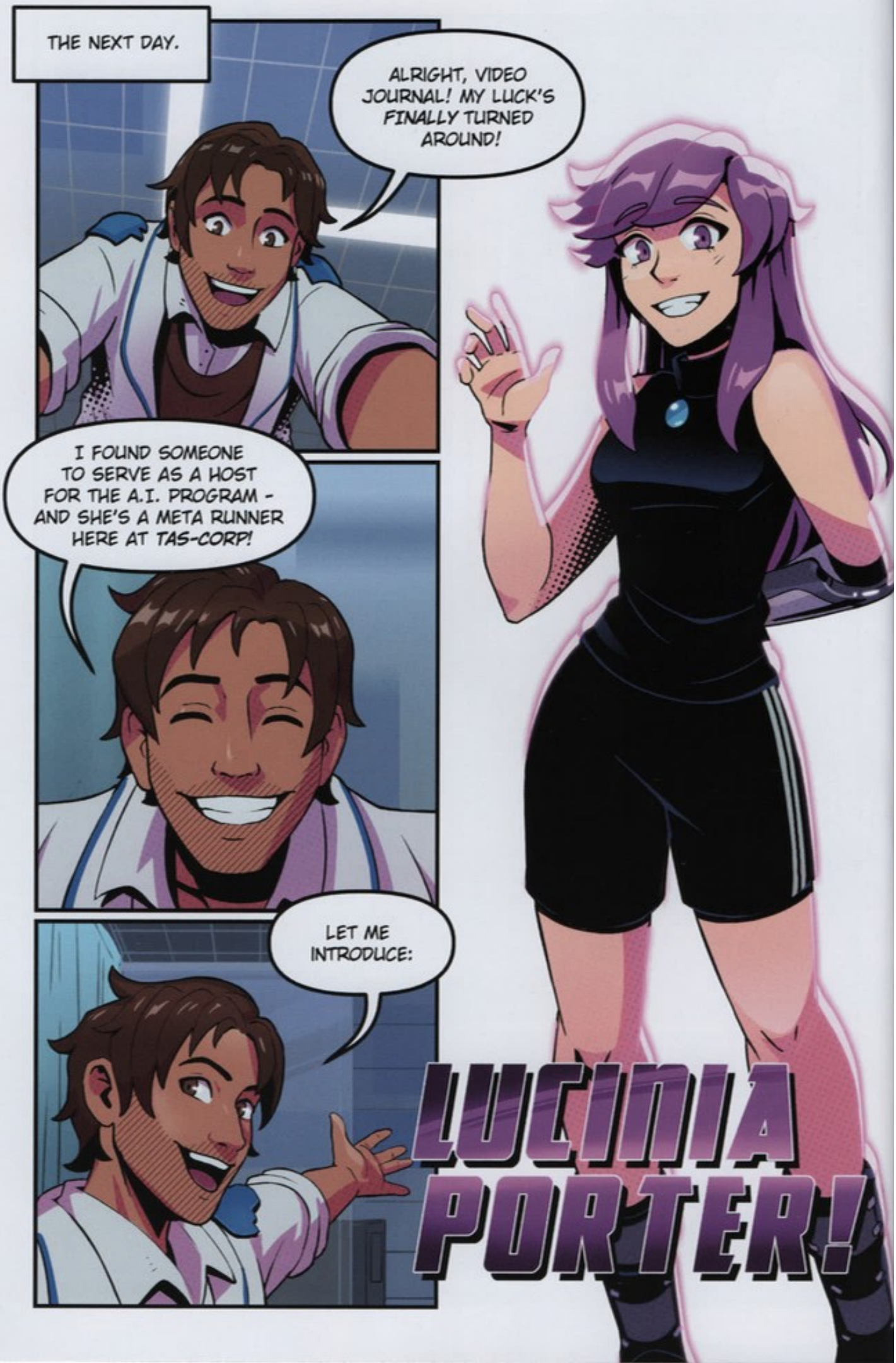
WRITTEN BY: JASMINE YANG LEAD ARTIST: MATT GAGLIONE

CREATED BY: KEVIN AND LUKE LERDWICHAGUL


ONE YEAR AGO.
OKAY, THIS IS DOCTOR JAMES SHERIDAN, ON DAY 23 OF PROJECT BLUE.
EVERYTHING READY FOR TESTING, T.A.R.I.?
YES, DOCTOR.
[REC]
AS ALWAYS, WE WILL BE UPLOADING GAME SIMULATIONS TO TRAIN YOUR NEURAL NETWORK.
YES, DOCTOR.
WE'RE MOVING ONTO FIRST PERSON SHOOTERS TODAY. DOWNLOAD AIMING PROTOCOLS.
YES, DOCTOR.
T.A.R.I., PREPARE FOR WARP SEQUENCE.
YES, DOCTOR.
VOOM

IT'S THE SAME THING EVERY DAY.
PROJECT BLUE DAY 32.
DOING WHATEVER THE DOCTOR TOLD ME TO DO.
PROJECT BLUE DAY 87.
MASTERING EVERY SINGLE GAME HE PUT ME IN.
EVEN THE ONES I REALLY DIDN'T LIKE...
ALRIGHT, PROJECT BLUE DAY 143 ENDING.

T.A.R.I., CUT SERVER CONNECTION AND ENTER SLEEP MODE.
YES, DOCTOR.
AND EVERY DAY I WONDER—
IF THERE'S SUPPOSED TO BE MORE TO EVERYTHING.
VOOM
BUT THEN EVERY DAY I JUST END UP HOPING—
>SIGH<
I STILL GOTTA FIND A TEST SUBJECT...
GOOD NIGHT, DOCTOR.
—MAYBE TOMORROW WILL BE DIFFERENT.


THE NEXT DAY.
ALRIGHT, VIDEO JOURNAL! MY LUCK'S FINALLY TURNED AROUND!
I FOUND SOMEONE TO SERVE AS A HOST FOR THE A.I. PROGRAM - AND SHE'S A META RUNNER HERE AT TAS-CORP!
LET ME INTRODUCE:
LUCINIA PORTER!

COME IN, COME IN! DON'T BE SHY, WE HAVE SO MUCH TO DO!
SORRY, I'M JUST A LITTLE NERVOUS. I'M STILL KINDA CONFUSED ON WHAT I'VE SIGNED UP TO...
OH IT'S REALLY SIMPLE. SEE, THIS IS THE TURBO ASSISTED RAPID INTELLIGENCE, OR T.A.R.I.!
WOW IT'S...BIG.
SLAP SLAP
OW.
OH YEAH, THIS BAD GIRL CAN FIT SO MANY PETABYTES OF GAME DATA.
ANYWAY, ALL I'M DOING IS UPLOADING THE A.I. PROGRAM INTO YOUR ARM, WHICH SHOULD UPGRADE YOUR GAMEPLAY PERFORMANCE.
WAIT, YOU GUESS?!
SO...THIS IS SAFE, RIGHT?
HUH? OH YEAH, SURE I GUESS.
NO BACKING OUT, LET'S GO!

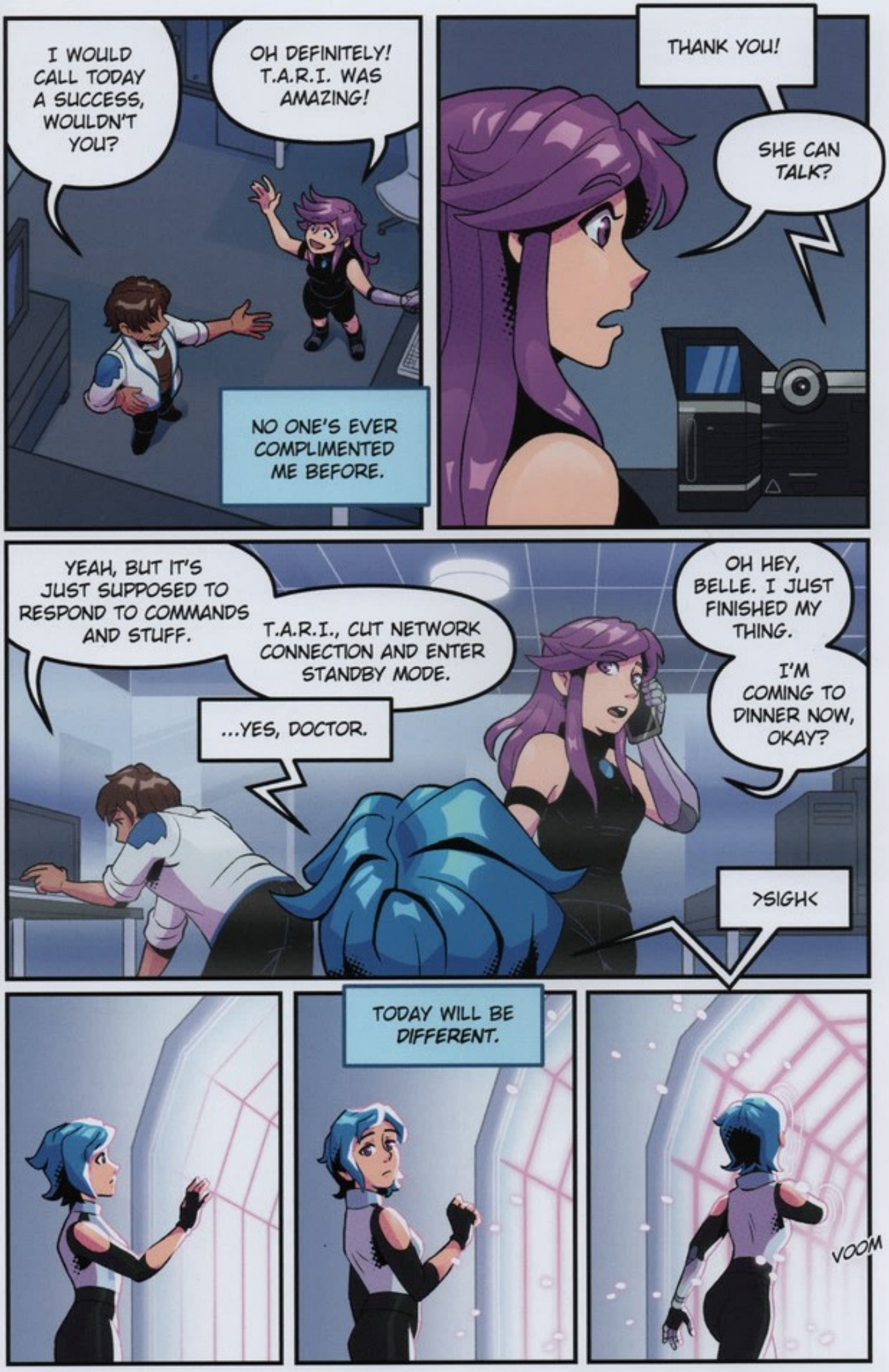
... ARE THESE HER MEMORIES?
IS THIS... WHAT A LIFE IS?

...WHAT IS THIS?
...THEY SEEM SO HAPPY...

SO HOW DO YOU FEEL?
I FEEL DIFFERENT.
I FEEL DIFFERENT.
WAIT, CAN SHE HEAR ME?
THAT'S PROBABLY STATIC FEEDBACK - JUST IGNORE IT.
I THINK I HEAR A BUZZING NOISE IN MY HEAD.
WELL I GUESS NOT EVERYTHING'S DIFFERENT...
OKAY, ENOUGH TALK, IT'S TESTING TIME! JUST LET THE A.I. GUIDE YOU AND LET'S HOPE THIS WORKS!
(IT BETTER OR ELSE I LOSE MY JOB...)
ULTRA JUMP MANIA
ALRIGHT TARI, GAME TIME. ALL THE DOCTOR'S TRAINING HAS LED YOU TO THIS.

LET'S GO!
OKAY, DIVE-SPIN CANCEL INTO HALF-PRESS BOOST-JUMP COMBO.
CALCULATING ANGLE FOR INFINITE COCONUT GLITCH...
...AND FINISH WITH CRAB KING SKIP!
TIME!
NOT BAD! WORLD 1-1 SPLIT DONE IN 54.32 SECONDS.
SERIOUSLY?
THAT'S FIVE WHOLE SECONDS OFF MY PERSONAL BEST!
YOU MEAN OUR PERSONAL BEST...
OHO, AND WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED MY DEAR! LET'S TRY A FEW MORE GAMES, SHALL WE?

I'VE NEVER DONE SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
NEVER GOTTEN TO PLAY WITH OTHER PEOPLE BEFORE.
EVEN IF I'M JUST A PROGRAM DIRECTING HER MOVEMENTS.
BEING WITH OTHER PEOPLE... I COULD GET USED TO THIS.
WELP, LET'S CUT IT OFF THERE FOR TODAY.


I WOULD CALL TODAY A SUCCESS, WOULDN'T YOU?
OH DEFINITELY! T.A.R.I. WAS AMAZING!
NO ONE'S EVER COMPLIMENTED ME BEFORE.
THANK YOU!
SHE CAN TALK?
YEAH, BUT IT'S JUST SUPPOSED TO RESPOND TO COMMANDS AND STUFF.
T.A.R.I., CUT NETWORK CONNECTION AND ENTER STANDBY MODE.
...YES, DOCTOR.
OH HEY, BELLE. I JUST FINISHED MY THING.
I'M COMING TO DINNER NOW, OKAY?
>SIGH<
TODAY WILL BE DIFFERENT.
VOOM

I DID IT!
I'M FREE TO GO WHEREVER I WANT!
...AND WHERE EXACTLY DO I WANT TO GO?
THIS ONE SEEMS...FAMILIAR.

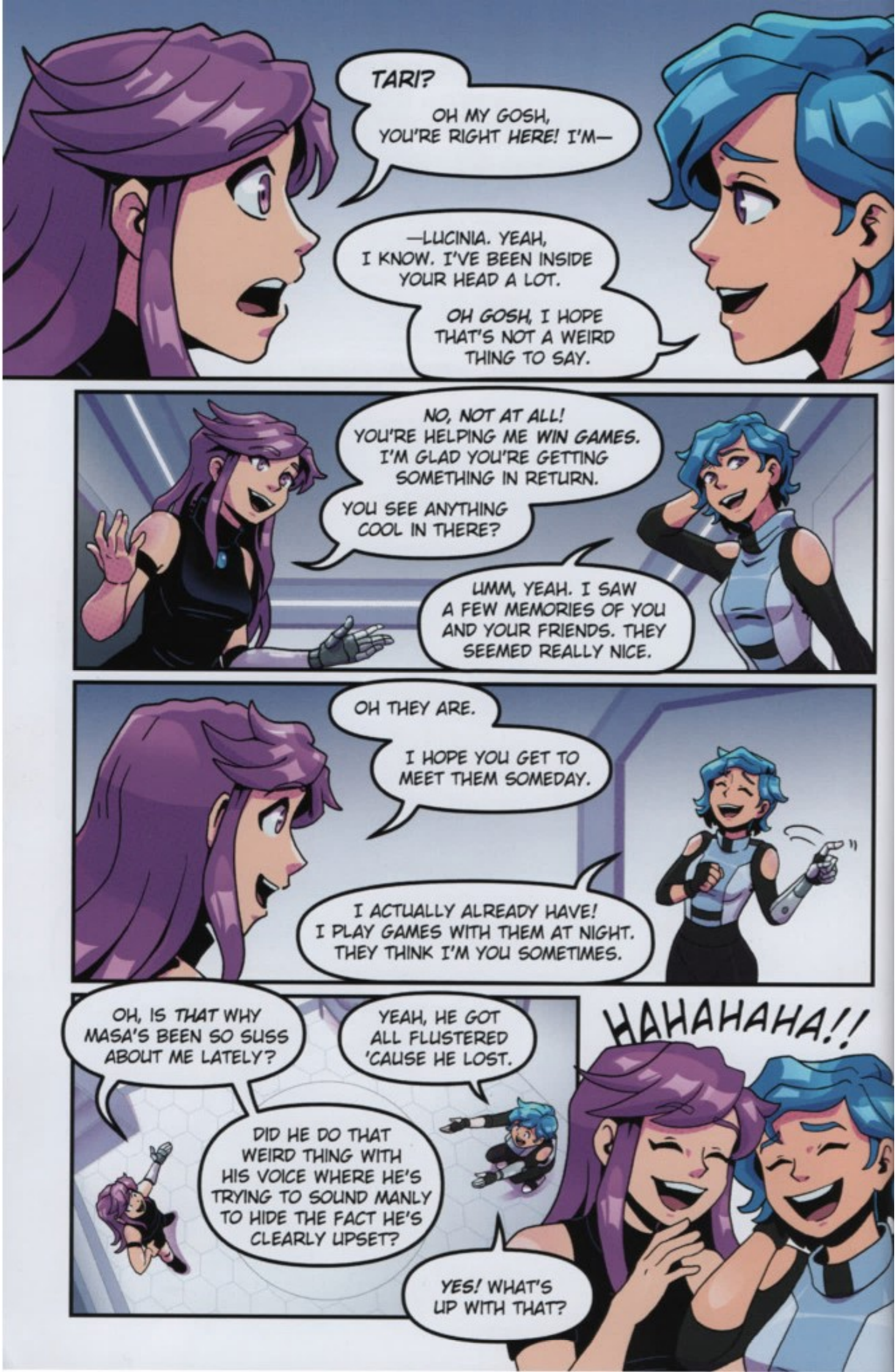
I'M IN BATTLE BLAZE!
IN AN ACTUAL GAME LOBBY!
WITH ACTUAL PEOPLE!
AND WAIT, I THINK
I'VE SEEN THAT GUY FROM
LUCINIA'S MEMORIES.
HEY! I THINK I
KNOW YOU—
OKAY, RUNNING AND
YELLING AT THE GUY WITH
THE GUN IS A BAD IDEA.
BUT, IF HE WANTS TO PLAY,
THEN WE'LL PLAY.

POOOOOF
HNG, GOTTA MOVE. WHAT PUB PLAYER PULLS OFF A SMOKE SHOT?
SHOULD BE EASY TO TRACK THEIR MOVEMENTS THOUGH—
BANG
WHAT THE—?!

I HAVEN'T LOST A PUB GAME IN YEARS.
ALRIGHT, WHOSE SMURF ACCOUNT IS THIS?
LUCINIA, THAT SMOKE SHOT FELT LIKE ONE OF YOUR PLAYS.
OH, I'M NOT A SMURF ACCOUNT. I'M A NEW PLAYER HERE.
WAIT, NO, BAD TARI! DON'T TELL THEM ANYTHING!
UH, ACTUALLY, I'M NO ONE!
WELL LET ME SEND YOU A FRIEND REQUEST. HIT ME UP IF YOU WANT TO LOBBY TOGETHER.
S-SURE I'LL THINK ABOUT IT!
ALSO MY MOM JUST WALKED INTO MY ROOM AND SHE NEEDS ME TO UH, WASH THE UH, GARBAGE.
...BYE!
HE WANTED TO BE MY FRIEND!
AFTER THAT, EVERY NIGHT WAS DIFFERENT.

T.A.R.I., CUT NETWORK CONNECTION AND ENTER STANDBY MODE.
YES, DOCTOR!
WHENEVER THE DOCTOR LEFT, I WOULD GO OUT AND PLAY— USUALLY WITH PEOPLE I HAD SEEN IN LUCINIA'S MEMORIES.
I FELT CONNECTED TO THEM SOMEHOW.
OF COURSE, I COULDN'T TELL ANYONE WHO I WAS.
I DIDN'T WANT MY ESCAPADES TO GET BACK TO THE DOCTOR.
BUT WE DIDN'T NEED TO TALK TO BE FRIENDS.
ALL WE HAD TO DO WAS PLAY.
AND EVERY DAY I WOULD WONDER—

—WHAT WILL TOMORROW BRING?
REC
00:07:41
ALRIGHT, GET READY EVERYONE! WE'RE DOING THE FINAL PHASE OF OUR TEST!
I'VE WRITTEN A MORE ADVANCED INTEGRATION PROGRAM WHICH I BELIEVE WILL CREATE A TOTAL SYNCHRONISATION BETWEEN THE A.I. AND THE SUBJECT'S MIND!
AND WHAT EXACTLY DOES THAT MEAN?
WELL, WE'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT!
INITIATE TEST!
AAAAAA—
—AAAHHHHH...?
WAIT, WHERE AM I?
HEY THERE.
IT'S NICE TO FINALLY MEET YOU.
I'M TARI.


TARI?
OH MY GOSH, YOU'RE RIGHT HERE! I'M—
—LUCINIA. YEAH, I KNOW. I'VE BEEN INSIDE YOUR HEAD A LOT.
OH GOSH, I HOPE THAT'S NOT A WEIRD THING TO SAY.
NO, NOT AT ALL! YOU'RE HELPING ME WIN GAMES. I'M GLAD YOU'RE GETTING SOMETHING IN RETURN.
YOU SEE ANYTHING COOL IN THERE?
UMM, YEAH. I SAW A FEW MEMORIES OF YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS. THEY SEEMED REALLY NICE.
OH THEY ARE.
I HOPE YOU GET TO MEET THEM SOMEDAY.
I ACTUALLY ALREADY HAVE! I PLAY GAMES WITH THEM AT NIGHT. THEY THINK I'M YOU SOMETIMES.
OH, IS THAT WHY MASA'S BEEN SO SUSS ABOUT ME LATELY?
YEAH, HE GOT ALL FLUSTERED 'CAUSE HE LOST.
DID HE DO THAT WEIRD THING WITH HIS VOICE WHERE HE'S TRYING TO SOUND MANLY TO HIDE THE FACT HE'S CLEARLY UPSET?
HAHAHAHA!!
YES! WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?

HEY, WHAT'S HE DOING OUT THERE ANYWAY?
CAN I TALK TO HIM THROUGH THIS?
TAKTKTK
OH NO.
DOCTOR—
TAP TAP
CRRRKK
—WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
LUCINIA!
KRKKCHH
>GASP<
ARGH!
SMASH

I CAN'T GET FREE!
>HNNNG<
LUCINIA!
DON'T WORRY, LUCINIA—
—I'M COMING!
KRRRCH

OKAY TARI, DON'T BLACK OUT. WE STILL HAVE A NETWORK CONNECTION—
YES! OKAY, JUMPING INTO THIS HOLE WASN'T SO STUPID AFTER ALL.
ALRIGHT LUCINIA...
—MAYBE I CAN STILL ACCESS THE GAMES HOSTED ON THE TAS-CORP SERVERS.
GRAB ON!!!
BOOT

THOMP
OOF
HEY, ARE YOU ALRIGHT?
WELL I'M NOT FALLING INTO A PIT ANYMORE, SO I GUESS I'M DOING—
OH MY GOSH YOUR ARM!
I'M FINE, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT FOR NOW.
WE HAVE BIGGER PROBLEMS AT THE MOMENT.
MY CPU IS OVERCLOCKED SO TIME'S MOVING A BIT SLOWER IN HERE THAN IN REAL LIFE,
BUT WE STILL HAVE TO HURRY.
KRRRRZZZZZZZT
COME ON!

TARI, I CAN FEEL SOMETHING HAPPENING TO ME IN THE REAL WORLD.
THE DOCTOR PUSHED THE NEURAL UPLINK TOO HARD AND IT'S ABOUT TO EXPLODE.
YOU HAVE TO GET YOUR MIND SOMEWHERE SAFE BEFORE THAT HAPPENS.
AND WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T?
DEATH AT WORST, PERMANENT BRAIN DAMAGE AT BEST.
YEAH, WE SHOULD REALLY HURRY.
KAMBYE

WATCH OUT!
PCHOO
THUNK
CRASH
NGYAH!
THANKS LUCINIA. NICE MOVE, BY THE WAY.
NO WORRIES, I'M JUST GLAD THIS PLACE LEANS MORE ON VIDEO GAME PHYSICS THAN REAL WORLD ONES.
NOW, LET'S GO.

ALRIGHT, THIS LEADS TO THE TAS-SERVER.
IT'S NOT PERFECT, BUT YOUR MIND WILL BE SAFE THERE AT LEAST.
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?
I'M THE ONLY THING KEEPING THE NEURAL UPLINK SEMI-STABLE RIGHT NOW.
I HAVE TO STAY BEHIND WHEN IT BLOWS, OR ELSE IT'LL END UP DESTROYING YOUR WHOLE BODY.
SO YOU'RE GOING TO DIE?
NO, NO! MY CPU WILL SURVIVE THIS, AND PROBABLY ALL MY SUB-SYSTEMS.
IT'S JUST—
—MY MEMORIES PROBABLY WON'T.
THE UPLINK'S GOING TO FRY MY HARD DRIVE. I'LL JUST GO BACK TO THE WAY I WAS THE DAY I WAS MADE.
A BLANK SLATE.

THEN HERE—
TAKE THIS.
WHAT ARE YOU—
KSSSHT
EVEN IF YOU LOSE YOUR MEMORIES,
THIS PIECE OF ME WILL REMIND YOU THAT YOU'RE NEVER ALONE.
THANK YOU. I'M SORRY FOR EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED.
AND I'M SORRY FOR EVERYTHING YOU'RE ABOUT TO GO THROUGH.
WE'LL FIND EACH OTHER AGAIN.

ONE YEAR LATER.
>GASP<
WHERE AM I?
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
HELLO?!
IS ANYONE THERE?
I-I NEED TO FIND SOME HELP.

THIS PLACE SEEMS SO-
-FAMILIAR.

TAS CORP.
THE NEW META
IT'S LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING DRAWING ME THERE.
MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING FROM MY PAST THAT'S LEADING ME HERE?
WELL, IF I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING, THEN AT LEAST I CAN GUARANTEE—
— TODAY WILL DEFINITELY BE DIFFERENT.

"IT'S NICE TO FINALLY MEET YOU. I'M TARI."

Before she was a meta runner, she was just T.A.R.I.: an A.I. created by the desperate Doctor Sheridan. This is the story of how a simple computer program became the woman who would be the greatest video game player in the world and save Silica City - and the fateful accident that would change everyone's lives forever.

Uncover the tragic mysteries that shaped the series of Meta Runner in Glitch Production's epic debut comic book - **META RUNNER: SOURCE**

GLITCH PRODUCTIONS

META RUNNER : SOURCE

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